

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending. Claims 1-8, 12, 15-18, 25 and 29 have been amended. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in response to the non-final Office Action.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 4, 10, 17 and 32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants traverse the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 15 to recite that "each emotion induction protocol is configured to induce a different emotion by combining contents capable of inducing cognitive action of the central nervous system and conditions capable of inducing physiological action of the autonomic nervous system." The specification of the instant application provides that, in one embodiment, "contents" include images viewed by the user on a screen. (See, e.g., Specification at page 14, lines 21-24 and FIG. 5). For example, the specification describes an example implementation where a user selects the emotion of anger, in which case "physical signals for displaying the contents of rape onto a screen" are outputted through the biostimulation module (50). (Specification at page 14, lines 21-24). Further, FIG. 5 of the instant application identifies additional exemplary contents that can be displayed to evoke particular emotions (e.g., images of a wedding ceremony to induce pleasure). (Specification at page 7, lines 27-29 and FIG. 5).

Thus, Applicants respectfully disagree that the term "contents" in claims 1, 10, 15 and 32 is not defined explicitly defined in the specification or implicitly through usage. (See, Office action at page 2). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, of claims 10 and 32, which depend from claims 1 and 15, respectively. Claims 4 and 17 have been amended and the term "contents" is no longer recited therein, thereby rendering the rejection of claims 4 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, moot.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-13, 15-21 and 23-32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,266,070 to Hagiwara et al. ("Hagiwara"). Applicants traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Hagiwara does not meet each and every recitation of the claims, which is necessary for a finding of anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102. For instance, as amended, independent claim 1 recites an apparatus for inducing emotions that includes, among other features, "an emotion induction module for selecting from a plurality of emotion induction protocols an emotion induction protocol capable of inducing a desired emotion selected by the user," where "each emotion induction protocol is configured to induce a different emotion by combining contents capable of inducing cognitive action of the central nervous system and conditions capable of inducing physiological action of the autonomic nervous system." Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office that Hagiwara teaches the emotion induction module recited in claim 1.

For example, Hagiwara describes a relaxation refreshment apparatus that provides vibratory, optical, pneumatic and acoustic stimuli in a desired combination to have a user recover from a mental state of fatigue and for realizing mental relaxation and refreshment. (Hagiwara at col. 1, lines 5-10). Hagiwara does not, however, describe a user selecting a desired emotion, no less selecting from a plurality of emotion induction protocols an emotion induction protocol capable of inducing the desired emotion selected by the user. For example, the specification of the instant application provides that, in one embodiment, six different emotional states can be induced, including pleasure, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise. (See, e.g., Specification at page 16, lines 6-7, Table 1 and FIG. 5). The relaxation refreshment apparatus described in Hagiwara only provides for realizing a "relaxation state." Thus, Hagiwara does not teach "an emotion induction module for selecting from a plurality of emotion induction protocols an emotion induction protocol capable of inducing a desired emotion selected by the user," as recited in claim 1.

Further, Hagiwara describes a controller (49) that controls respective stimulus means so as to induce a user into a relaxed state. (Hagiwara at col. 8, lines 17-19). Exemplary stimulus means described in Hagiwara include vibrating means, optical stimulus means (including lighting equipment and means for scattering incident light), pneumatic stimulus means, aromatic stimulus means, and acoustic stimulus means. (Hagiwara at col. 2, lines 30-32 and 38-51). While Hagiwara describes the controller (49) controlling the stimulus means for inducing a user into a relaxed state, nowhere does Hagiwara describe the controller (49) controlling a plurality of emotion induction protocols, where each emotion induction protocol is configured to induce a

different emotion by combining contents capable of inducing cognitive action of the central nervous system with conditions capable of inducing physiological action of the autonomic nervous system to induce different emotions.

For example, FIG. 5 of the instant application provides exemplary combinations of contents and conditions for emotion induction protocols capable of inducing the different emotions of pleasure, sadness, anger, fear, disgust and surprise. In particular, an emotion induction protocol capable of inducing the emotion of sadness might combine the exemplary conditions of blue or gray-based illumination and juniper or bergamot fragrance with the exemplary contents of images of the death of one's parents or images of parting. (Specification at page 7, lines 23-29). Thus, Hagiwara does not teach "each emotion induction protocol is configured to induce a different emotion by combining contents capable of inducing cognitive action of the central nervous system and conditions capable of inducing physiological action of the autonomic nervous system," as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that Hagiwara does not anticipate independent claim 1. Similarly, as amended, claim 15 recites a method for inducing emotions and includes features that are analogous to features recited in claim 1. Therefore, for the same reasons presented with respect to claim 1, Applicants submit that Hagiwara does not anticipate independent claim 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under § 102(b) over Hagiwara of claims 1 and 15, and of claims 2-13, 16-21 and 23-32, which depend therefrom, be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 14 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hagiwara, as applied to claims 1 and 15 above, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,909,260 to Salem et al. ("Salem"). Applicants traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

For at least the reasons presented with respect to independent claims 1 and 15, Applicants submit that claims 14 and 22, which depend therefrom, respectively, are patentable over Hagiwara, and that Salem does not supply the teachings missing from Hagiwara. At a minimum, no combination of Hagiwara and Salem appears to teach or suggest "selecting from a plurality of emotion induction protocols an emotion induction protocol capable of inducing a desired emotion selected by the user," where "each emotion induction protocol is configured to induce a different emotion by combining contents capable of inducing cognitive action of the central nervous system and conditions capable of inducing physiological action of the autonomic nervous system," as recited in claims 1 and 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 14 and 22, which depend from claims 1 and 15, respectively, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hagiwara in view of Salem be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is believed that this Response and Amendment does not require additional fees. However, if additional fees are required for any reason, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-4800 the necessary amount.

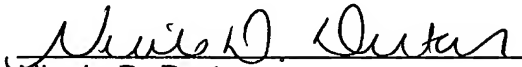
In the event that there are any questions concerning this paper, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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